



News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

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Eastern Pre-Release Inmates Helping to Build Playing Fields In New Queen Anne's County Park

Eleven Men Laying Four Truckloads of Sod Daily

TOWSON, MD (September 25, 2008)---Eleven inmates from the Division of Correction's Eastern Pre-Release Unit (EPRU) in Church Hill are paying society back in a way that will benefit generations of Queen Anne's County children: They're helping the county build four playing fields in a new park just north of Centreville.

The inmates have been laying thirty-six thousand square feet of sod daily--that's four tractor-trailer loads--- at Bloomfield Farm Park on Route 213 at the northern edge of Centreville. Later this fall, EPRU inmates will also plant 1,000 trees on the park's northern border.

"We're all about community and giving back, and this is a great way for the men to do just that," says EPRU Facility Administrator and Queen Anne's County native William "Buster" Blackiston. "These men feel good about helping the community, and they're learning skills at the same time. Many of them grew up in urban areas and had never even heard of 'sod' before. Now, they're literally building playing fields that will benefit thousands of kids."

EPRU has been a key player in Public Safety and Correctional Services Secretary Gary Maynard's plan to drastically increase the number of inmates who work, and the number of community projects performed by inmates. Under the direction of DOC Pre-Release Warden William Filbert, inmates who are close to their release date have performed a number of valuable community projects on the Eastern Shore, from planting thousands of trees to cleaning up railroad rights-of-way and restoring children's playing fields.

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